



Standards & Assessment UPDATE

California Department of Education

Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

November 2006

Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

STAR Contracts

Education Code Section 60643(e) requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to withhold no less than 10 percent of the amount budgeted for each separate and distinct component task provided for in the STAR Program contracts pending final completion of all component tasks. The contract requires liquidated damages to be paid by the contractor of up to 10 percent of the contract for any component task that the contractor, through its own fault or that of its subcontractors, fail to substantially perform by the date specified in the agreement.

At the November 8, 2006, State Board of Education (SBE) meeting, CDE reported that Educational Testing Service (ETS) satisfactorily performed the components tasks in the contract for the California Standards Tests (CSTs), Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS), and the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey). In addition, the CDE indicated that ETS satisfactorily performed the component tasks of the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) contract during the 2005–06 CAPA testing cycle. The SBE concurred with the CDE recommendation and released the 10 percent withhold to ETS for both contracts.

At the November 8, 2006, SBE meeting, the CDE outlined component tasks of the contract with Harcourt Assessment, Inc. (Harcourt) for the Aprenda 3 that were not satisfactorily performed. Specifically, CDE recommended that SBE determine that Harcourt failed

to satisfactorily perform the following tasks: delivery and collection of materials; test materials production, ordering, and packaging; and program support services. The SBE concurred with the CDE recommendation and withheld 10 percent totaling \$49,229 in liquidated damages.

For additional information regarding the STAR contract withhold, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/agenda1106.asp>.

STAR Program Apportionment

District superintendents and charter school administrators received STAR Program 2006 Apportionment Information Reports in early October. To be eligible for apportionment payments for the STAR Program, school districts and charter schools that tested independently of their districts must certify the accuracy of the apportionment information report for examinations administered during the calendar year. To ensure prompt payment, the superintendent or charter school administrator must sign the report and return it to the CDE by **December 31, 2006**.

For additional information on the STAR Program apportionment, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/nov06item12.doc>.

California Modified Assessment (CMA) Update

The CDE is currently working with ETS and the assessment review panel members to develop a blueprint for grades two through five in English-language arts and grade five in science. ETS administered the CMA pilot in early November 2006. The purpose of the

pilot was to gain better information on the characteristics of the students who might take the CMA. Results from the pilot will inform blueprint development and decision-making about the population to be tested.

For additional information on the CMA, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/nov06item12.doc>.

Testing Spanish-Speaking English Learners

Spanish-speaking English learners enrolled in grades two through eleven who either receive instruction in Spanish or have been in school in the United States fewer than 12 months at the time of testing will be required to take the STS **or** the Aprenda 3 in addition to taking the CST. In spring 2007, the STS will be administered to these students in grades two, three, and four and the Aprenda 3 will be administered to these students in grades five through eleven.

For additional information on the testing of Spanish-speaking English learners, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/nov06item12.doc>.

California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

Intensive Instruction Funding

The Budget Act for 2005–06 authorized \$20,000,000 for the purpose of providing intensive instruction and services for students in the class of 2006 who are required to pass the CAHSEE and have not yet passed one or both parts of the examination. Assembly Bill (AB) 128 set out the provisions for the CDE to allocate \$600 per eligible student to local educational agencies (LEAs) in order to provide these services. Ultimately, grants were awarded to nearly 350 districts, county offices of education, and charter schools on behalf of 33,333 students.

In 2006, AB 1811 authorized \$69,599,000 for the purpose of providing intensive instruction and services for students in the classes of 2007 and 2008 who are

required to pass the CAHSEE and have not yet passed one or both parts of the examination. *Education Code* Section 37254 and AB 1811 set out the provisions for the CDE to allocate up to \$500 per eligible student in the class of 2007 to LEAs in order to provide these services. After allocations were made to LEAs on behalf of the eligible students in the class of 2007, the remaining funds were distributed on behalf of eligible students in the class of 2008.

In 2006, AB 1802 authorized the CDE to allocate \$5,500,000 to LEAs for the purchase of SBE-approved, individualized, intervention materials for students who have not passed the CAHSEE. This is a one-time allocation and the CDE does not anticipate future allocations for this specific purpose at this time. **In November 2006, the CDE released an Invitation to Submit Intervention Materials for the CAHSEE. The CDE will evaluate materials received in response to this invitation and provide recommendations to the SBE at its March meeting regarding which CAHSEE intervention materials to approve. Once SBE approves a list of intervention materials, the CDE will distribute the allocation to LEAs for use in purchasing the SBE-approved materials.**

For additional information on the intensive instruction funding, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/nov06item8.doc>.

Independent Evaluation Report

Education Code Section 60855 requires the CDE to contract for a multiyear evaluation report on the CAHSEE. The CDE also requires an annual report of the previous year's testing activities. The CAHSEE independent evaluator, Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), has prepared the year seven annual report on the CAHSEE. At the November 8, 2006, SBE meeting, HumRRO provided the SBE with an overview of the report's findings and recommendations. The report may be found on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/evaluations.asp>.

Exemption for Students with Disabilities

On January 30, 2006, Senate Bill (SB) 517 was signed into law and took effect immediately, providing a one-year exemption from the requirement to pass the CAHSEE for certain students with disabilities in the class of 2006. As a result of the passage of SB 517 (*Education Code Section 60852.3*), for the 2005–06 school year, all local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to grant a high school diploma to students with disabilities under the conditions outlined in the law. If the LEA does not grant a diploma pursuant to this exemption, the SBE must review the LEAs decision and may direct the LEA to grant a high school diploma to the student.

At its November 8, 2006, meeting, the SBE heard 25 such cases submitted by seven LEAs. The SBE approved the CDE recommendation to affirm the LEA decisions not to grant diplomas in all 25 cases.

If you have any questions regarding the CAHSEE program, please contact the High School Exit Exam Office, Standards and Assessment Division, at (916) 445-9449 or by e-mail at cahsee@cde.ca.gov.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT)

New Performance Level Cut Scores

The new performance level cut scores and common scale for the CELDT took effect July 1, 2006. School districts will receive student reports based on the new cut scores six to eight weeks after delivery to the contractor for scoring. The common scale will allow districts and the state to track growth across adjacent grade spans at the scale score level.

The new performance levels may be found on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/el/cutpoints.asp>. If you have any questions about the CELDT program, please contact the CELDT and Psychometrics Office, Standards and Assessment Division, at (916) 445-8420 or by e-mail at celdt@cde.ca.gov.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) Peer Review

According to the peer review conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (ED), additional evidence is necessary for California to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements of NCLB. ED identified a need for an independent, alignment study of the CSTs and the CAPA to grade level academic content and achievement standards, and performance level descriptors for mathematics, English-language arts, and science for the CSTs and the CAHSEE.

CDE has contracted with Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) to conduct the independent, alignment study of the CSTs and CAPA as well as develop performance level descriptors for the CSTs and CAHSEE. California teachers and curriculum specialists will participate in workshops in late November and early December to conduct this work. At its November 8, 2006, meeting, the SBE approved policy definitions to help guide the development of the performance level descriptors. Once developed, the performance level descriptors will be a useful tool in communicating CST and CAHSEE results to teachers, parents, and students.

For additional information on the peer review and the policy definitions, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/nov06item10.doc>.

Academic Performance Index (API)

2006 API Base

At the November 8, 2006, SBE meeting, the CDE provided SBE with recommendations from the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) Advisory Committee as well as recommendations from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) regarding the calculation of the 2006 API base. The SBE did not take action on this item at the November meeting and it will be heard again by SBE at its January 2007, meeting.

More information...

For more information about any of the mentioned SBE items, access the SBE agenda on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/>.